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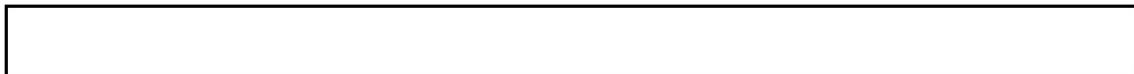


9 October 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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*Iraq-Syria: "Military unity" between Syria and Iraq, proclaimed yesterday, is another step leading toward some kind of political union of the two countries.

The announcement, broadcast simultaneously in Syria and Iraq, states that a supreme defense council consisting of a commander in chief and three members from each country is to be established. Iraqi Defense Minister Ammash will be commander in chief. Some Syrian troops have already moved into Iraq, but the movement of Iraqi troops to Syria is still unconfirmed.

The international leadership of the Baath Party, which rules in both countries, is now meeting in Damascus. Further announcements regarding other kinds of "unity" may come from this conference.

Egyptian President Nasir will almost certainly regard these steps as a direct challenge. Cairo's clandestine radio has already criticized the movement of Syrian troops to Iraq. Unrest and demonstrations by elements who believe that any Arab union must include Egypt are possible, particularly in northern Syria.

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*Colombia: (The government apparently believes its security forces can handle the terrorist problem at its present scale, but fears that both rural and urban violence will increase in intensity.)

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(The government believes that the violence is the work of Cuban-trained terrorists, and that members of the extremist United Front for Revolutionary Action and other leftist organizations are involved.)

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(The government's estimate of its capabilities in the face of increasing terrorist activity seems unduly sanguine. [redacted] the inefficiency of the security services and the inability of the judicial machinery to deal firmly with captured terrorists, who often evade conviction or manage to escape from detention, are serious flaws.)

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(On balance, it seems probable that government security services would be unable to cope with a full-scale coordinated campaign of urban and rural terrorism. Such a situation could precipitate a movement by politicians and the military to remove President Valencia, whose leadership they already consider to be unacceptably weak.)

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NOTES

Malaysia: A general strike by leftist unions in Singapore began on 8 October, primarily for political objectives. The leftists are reacting to pressure on them by the Lee government, which feels that it is in a strong position because it handily won recent local assembly elections. While British officials believe that violence may occur, the available security forces appear ample to control the situation.

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Honduras: The capital is relatively quiet while the Honduran military continues to arrest left-wing Liberals and known Communists, and to conduct a house-to-house search for weapons. A number of Liberal Party asylees in the Costa Rican Embassy have been allowed to leave Honduras. These actions, coupled with the recommendation of the Liberal Party president that the party adopt a nonviolent policy, might tend to reduce the danger of significant new outbreaks.

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*Brazil: The federal chamber of deputies on 7 October voted to allow President Goulart to withdraw his earlier request for a state of siege on the ostensible grounds that it was no longer needed. The request faced almost certain defeat, being opposed by factions of the right and left, including Goulart's own Labor Party. None of the basic problems and animosities which precipitated the request have been resolved, and further economic and political instability, including a possible cabinet shakeup, can be expected.

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*Venezuela: Yesterday's widespread acts of sabotage and terrorism apparently are the response of Venezuelan extremists to President Betancourt's 7 October warning that he intends to crack down on them even harder. Among the incidents reported were two attempts to sabotage oil pipelines; sniper attacks on police and national guardsmen; the bombing of two radio stations; and an attack on a village in Falcon state.

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